

Racing Rules of Sailing

Rule A5

A submission from the Chairman of the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective

To make it clear that, although a race committee may score a boat 'NSC' that broke rule 28.1 by failing to sail the course, the race committee is not required to do so. Requiring all race committees to enforce rule 28.1 would put an unreasonable burden on race committees for local and regional events.

Proposal

Change rule A5 as shown:

A5 SCORES DETERMINED BY THE RACE COMMITTEE

A5.1 A boat that did not ~~start, sail the course~~ or *finish*, or comply with rule 30.2, 30.3, 30.4 or 78.2, or that retires or takes a penalty under rule 44.3(a), shall be scored accordingly by the race committee without a hearing. ~~Only the protest committee may take other scoring actions that worsen a boat's score.~~

A5.2 A boat that did not *start*, ~~did not sail the course~~, did not *finish*, retired or was disqualified shall be scored points for the finishing place one more than the number of boats entered in the series. A boat that is penalized under rule 30.2 or that takes a penalty under rule 44.3(a) shall be scored points as provided in rule 44.3(c).

A5.3 If the notice of race or sailing instructions state that rule A5.3 will apply, rule A5.2 is changed so that a boat that came to the starting area but did not *start*, ~~did not sail the course~~, did not *finish*, retired or was disqualified shall be scored points for the finishing place one more than the number of boats that came to the starting area, and a boat that did not come to the starting area shall be scored points for the finishing place one more than the number of boats entered in the series.

A5.4 **In addition, the race committee may, without a hearing, score a boat that did not sail the course 'NSC'. That boat shall be scored the same points as a boat that did not finish.**

A5.5 **Only the protest committee may take other scoring actions that worsen a boat's score.**

Current Position

As above.

Reasons

1. Rule A5 was extensively changed in 2021. One of the changes was to require the race committee, without a hearing, to score a boat that did not sail the course as 'NSC'. Prior to 2021, if the race committee had evidence that a boat had not sailed the course, it could protest the boat for breaking rule 28, but it could not 'worsen her score'. If, as a result of the race committee's protest, the boat was found to have broken rule 28 by not sailing the course, then the protest committee would worsen her score by disqualifying her.
2. For major events in which boats carry electronic tracking devices or in which the race committee records the order in which the boats round each rounding mark, the race committee will have reliable evidence that each boat either did, or did not, sail the course. For such events it is quite reasonable for the race committee to worsen the score of any boats that it knows broke rule 28.1 by not sailing the course.

However, for most local and regional events, tracking devices are not use and the race committee does not record the order in which the boats round each rounding mark. For such events, the race committee will rarely know which boats broke rule 28.1 by failing to sail the course.

3. Race committees at local and regional events have inquired whether new rule A5 requires them to send observers to each rounding mark so that, after each race, they will know which boats failed to sail the course. It was not the intent of new rule A5 to require all race committees to collect data to enable them to know which boats sailed the course.
 4. This submission's proposed changes in rule A5 permit a race committee to score a boat 'NSC' if it has reliable evidence that the boat failed to sail the course, but it does not require that it do so. If the submission is approved, race committees at major events that use tracking or record the order of roundings to score a boat 'NSC' if she fails to sail the course, but it will not require race committees at local or regional events to collect that data.
 5. The last sentence of current rule A5.1 is an important message about the roles of the race committee and the protest committee. By moving it to new rule A5.6, where it is the only provision of the rule, this message will be more prominent and, by having its own number, easier to refer to when writing protest decisions or when instructing race officials. Also, moving that sentence to a new rule A5.6, enabled rule A5 to be considerably less complicated.
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